

A GEISHA GIRL.

By SADIE OLCOTT.

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"By the spirits of your ancestors I beseech you to hide me!"

The words were spoken by a young Japanese who rushed into a tea house where stood a startled geisha girl. It was more than forty years ago, when the followers of the mikado and the shogun were struggling for the supremacy in Japan.

"What is it, Herobumi?" asked the girl quickly.

"The shogunate! They are after me. If they catch me they will kill me. Quick, Nikama!"

The girl darted glances in every direction, and finally her eyes lighted on what she at once recognized as the best place for concealment. In every Japanese house is a dust hole. The ground floor is raised about two feet above the earth, and a square hole is cut in the floor, into which the dust and litter of the rooms are swept.

"Get in there, quick!" cried the girl, pointing to the hole.

Herobumi sprang into the hole, doubling himself up to occupy the space. Nikama put a board over it, and on the board she placed a brazier, thus concealing the hole and making it appear that the brazier rested on the floor. Then she sat down before the brazier, in which was a fire, and appeared to be lazily warming herself. In another moment a band of armed men rushed in. The girl looked up at them in feigned surprise.

"A man is here," said their leader, "whom we seek. We saw him enter. Where is he?"

"You are welcome to look for him."

"We will see for ourselves," replied the man, and, with his followers, he began a search of the premises. They moved furniture; they opened closets; they pulled out drawers. Into every cranny in the house they peered, but none of them thought of the dust hole. Thinking him they sought had simply passed through and had gone on, they rushed out as hurriedly as they had come in. When they were well away the girl called to the hidden:

"There is nothing now to fear, Herobumi, but you had better remain where you are for awhile in case they come back."

"Thank you, Nikama. You have saved my life. I knew when I came, having been here at times for tea, that I would not be betrayed, but I did not know that I would find one who by her presence of mind would keep my head on my shoulders."

The girl went out and looked about, and finding all pursuit of the fugitive in that vicinity had been abandoned, returned to the house, removed the brazier, and Herobumi came out of the hole. He did not think of the dust hole with which he was covered, but Nikama did, and, getting a wet broom, she brushed his clothes. Then he took both her hands in his and said to her:

"You are but a poor geisha girl, while I am of a far different rank, but I promise that you shall never regret the act of this day."

When it was dark he slipped out of the tea house and found a more permanent place of safety.

One day—it was after the shogun had been permanently defeated and the mikado securely placed upon the throne of Japan—a jirikiha stopped before the tea house. Nikama was standing at the door, and who should she see slight from the jirikiha but the young man whose life she had saved. He came up and led her out on to a veranda.

"I have not seen you for a long while," she said. "I feared that the shogunate had caught you at last."

"No; I was too slippery for them. But all my inventive powers—and there are those who esteem them considerable—are as nothing compared with yours. Had it not been for your quick acting brain I should not now be here."

The girl, naturally pleased at his appreciation of her art, smiled and blushed.

"I told you that you would not regret your act of that terrible day," continued the visitor. "For shall you. I wish to make you a present. I will first offer you that which I value most highly and which will include within itself all I can give you. Then if you prefer a part rather than the whole you may ask for what you like and I will give it."

"You speak in riddles, Herobumi, or, rather, you speak like the mikado when you say you will give what I ask. Are you, a young man not yet thirty years old, so powerful that you can give me anything I ask?"

"I can at least give you that which I prize most."

"And that is—"

"Myself."

The girl stood looking at him in astonishment. No high caste young man in Japan was likely to marry a geisha girl.

"I am the whole," resumed the young man. "If you don't find me to your taste you may take a part."

"But I know you only as one who has come here to drink tea and be amused," said Nikama.

"Oh, you wish for my credentials. Well, then, know that when our new government was formed it was I who was principally intrusted with its formation. Then I was made prime minister by the emperor, and that office I hold at the present time."

It is true that Prince Herobumi, of Japan, who was recently assassinated, married the geisha girl who saved his life by hiding him in a dust hole, put a board and transfer on it and then invited the followers of the shogun to search the house.

Sometimes there isn't.

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JOHN ABNER MEAD—
A Dramatic Life History

Dr. Mead Announces His Candidacy and His Platform—Condensed Biography of a Remarkable Character—The Story of How a Penniless Boy Rose to Become a Great Business and Political Force—An Interesting and Dramatic History.



JOHN ABNER MEAD.

YES, I am a candidate for promotion," said Dr. John Abner Mead of Rutland, lieutenant governor of Vermont. "I expect that my friends in Rutland city and Rutland county will present my name as a candidate for governor at the next Republican state convention."

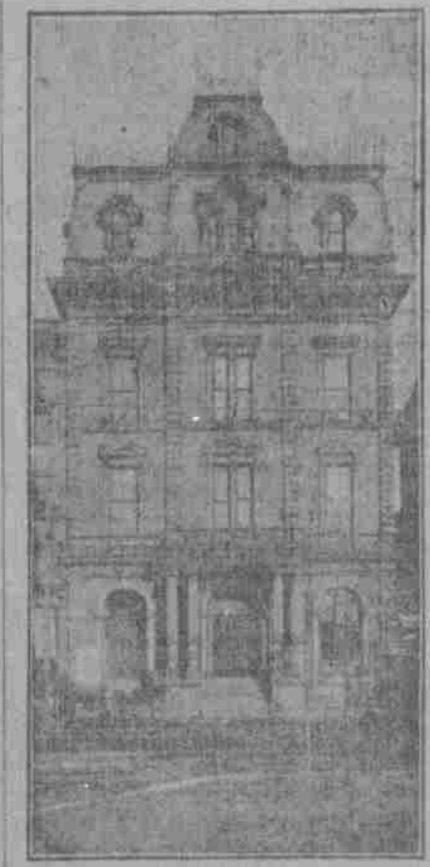
The foregoing was in answer to a question asked by a reporter. The hour was 7:30 a. m.

The scene was the office of the Howe Scale works in Rutland, and the singular combination of early hours and important political news is explained by the fact that ever since Dr. Mead came into the control of the scale works, twenty-two years ago, he has made a practice of being "on the job" as early as any employee of the concern.

The extraordinary singleness of purpose, fertility of resource, courage, concentration, ability, superb vitality and high personal character that have made it possible for a man of the humblest antecedents to rise from a condition of biting poverty to the control of a half dozen successful and important enterprises reads more like a story book than a prosaic record of everyday life.

No person can read the biography of John Abner Mead without feeling the tremendously dramatic possibilities that inhere to a life of fixed purpose and integrity, with an eye firmly fixed on success. From the time that Dr. Mead was left a virtual orphan he seems to have had but one object in mind, and that the fullest development of his own possibilities and powers in harmony with the welfare of those with whom he was associated and of the various enterprises with which he has been connected.

Going through college on \$425, painfully and scrupulously saved from the earnings of unaccustomed toil, interrupting his college course to serve as a soldier in the civil war, studying medicine and assisting in commonplace tasks about a doctor's office and finally doing manual labor of the severest



THE RUTLAND NATIONAL BANK, RUTLAND.

type in a Rutland quarry to procure the means to secure the best medical education possible—all these point to a character of consistent and singular force.

The side lights on his college life demonstrate that he was able in those days to eliminate whatever may have stood in the way of his success, and

the spectacle of this resolute, indefatigable young Vermont, braving all the ridicule of his companions and the humiliation of wearing old and worn clothes in order that he might receive an education, indicates a Spartan fortitude that comes very near to explaining his life's success. It is a far cry from the luxurious medical students of today, with their expensive suits of apartments, their good clothes, their sports, their relaxations and the generally easy way in which their successes are secured, to the poor, almost mean, expedients of Dr. Mead's college training and the little office in which he began to practice his profession.

Young Vermonters who are looking for an example of success by dint of will power and applied ability will not do better than to read the story of those early days, explaining as they do the steady, unintermittent march of prosperity which followed his ready acceptance and use of the first opportunities that fortune put in his way.

Grown men will be struck with admiration when they consider the extraordinary versatility which his professional and business life have disclosed. It is very seldom that a man, after making a measurable success in a learned profession like medicine, should be able to translate himself easily to business life and not only prove himself the peer of his associates, but demonstrate his ability to make a signal success in several diverging lines of business.

The reorganization of the bankrupt Howe Scale company was a task for a trained executive and financier, and yet this young doctor made a striking success of the supposed forlorn hope. The administration of a banking property is considered to be career enough for most men, and yet he has made it a mere detail of the day's work.

The operation of a large farm is one of the most intricate problems of the day, and yet it is one of his chief recreations to join his men in spring-time, haying or harvesting and demonstrate his practical knowledge of agriculture as well as his love for the open.

The management and financing of a large business block is frequently a



FIELD OF ENSILAGE CORN.

(These rows are nearly half a mile long.)

fair career for some men, and yet the doctor has been able to operate his large well tenanted block not only profitably, but as a mere annex to his other interests.

His entrance into the state political field was in its way no less remarkable, and experienced political general say that his instinctive grasp of the principles of organization at the time when he was nominated by the Republican state convention as lieutenant governor indicates political ability of a high order. His candidacy at this time has already acquired a considerable momentum and is being watched with the closest interest by all men who have made state politics a study.

The Doctor's Platform. When questioned as to whether he was prepared to take a stand on matters of public import, the doctor said: "Yes; I have some decided opinions in regard to public questions. Briefly, I am in favor of progress in every avenue of the state, the best business methods in the administration of its affairs and equal opportunity to every citizen of the commonwealth."

Pressed to be more explicit, the lieutenant governor submitted the following as his idea of public issues before the state:

"I am in favor of—

"First—A business administration of state affairs on the lines of economy and efficiency that have made all business successful.

"Second—Practical schools, with a view to developing more efficient workers—agricultural, industrial and commercial.

"Third—The development of the farming interests of Vermont by means of an agricultural school and model farm for introducing the most modern methods.

"Fourth—A system of taxation that will equalize the burden, minimize

double taxation and develop rather than restrict opportunity.

"Fifth—Better roads for Vermont by the introduction of improved methods, with state supervision and aid wherever and whenever practicable.

"Sixth—The good offices of the executive in settling disputes between labor and capital by arbitration.

"Seventh—Fewer and more uniform laws, with no special legislation that can be covered by general statutes.

"Eighth—(a) A system of courts that will provide cheap and speedy justice to rich and poor.

"(b) A radical reduction of court expenses by business methods of administration.

"Ninth—A continuation and extension of the state's forestry policy for



BIRTHPLACE OF JOHN A. MEAD.

[An Old-Fashioned Vermont Farmhouse, Not Luxurious.]

the permanent improvement of Vermont woodlands.

"Tenth—Laws that will encourage and foster Vermont industries, with the view of providing a home market for our agricultural products.

"Eleventh—Measures that will give prominence to the natural beauty and attractions of our mountains, valleys, lakes and streams, interest the vacationist and summer visitor and attract permanent residents from abroad."

Biography of John A. Mead.

John Abner Mead was the only son of Roswell Howley Mead, grandson of James Mead, and Lydia Ann, daughter of Eli Gorham of Rutland. James Mead was the first white man to settle in Rutland township. He bought of Nathan Stone of Windsor 7,000 acres of land, paying for the same in horses valued at \$335.35. He was a distinguished pioneer and patriot and was colonel of the Third Vermont colonial regiment.

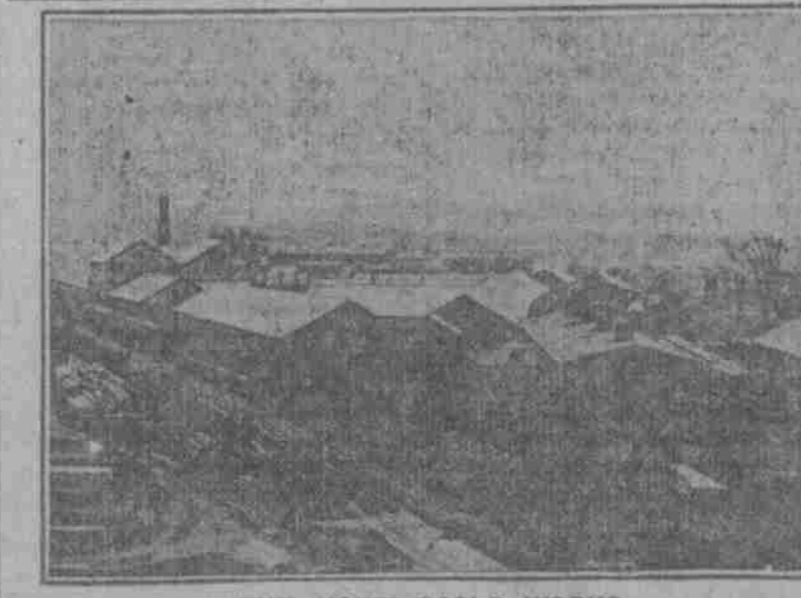
Howley R. Mead was born in West Rutland, in a hotel which his father, Abner Mead, conducted. On the maternal side John Abner Mead, subject of this sketch, inherited some of the bluest blood in this country. One of Lydia Ann Gorham's ancestors, John Howland, was a brave and enterprising member of the Mayflower colony, and four of them were original Pilgrims. Howley R. Mead moved to Fair Haven in 1839 and settled on a small farm there.

Left to Care of His Aunt.

John Abner Mead was born on April 20, 1841. His mother, Lydia Ann Gorham Mead, died in August. The infant son was left with a family in Fair Haven to be cared for, remaining with them for several years. Then Howley Mead married again, and the boy was virtually given to an aunt, Mrs. Blanchard, who cared for him for a number of years and with whom he lived much of the time until he was sixteen years of age.

Struggling For an Education.

Young Mead attended the common schools at West Rutland until the spring of 1858. When he was about twelve years of age he conceived a very strong desire to obtain an education. His father was a poor man



THE HOWE SCALE WORKS.

[These Buildings and Yards Cover Over Sixteen Acres of Ground.]

and told him that he was willing to "give him his time" and that he must make his own way as best he could.

In fact, the sole inheritance which he received from his father was a string of old-fashioned sleigh bells.

Then began the slow, steady saving

of every possible penny with the great goal of learning as its object. He "worked out," he fished and sold his catch, did odd jobs, and often a man's work at a boy's wage, until in the years of 1857 and 1858 he was made teacher of a district school, for which he received \$15 per month and "boarded around," as the custom was. When he received the \$45 for the final three months' service, he had accumulated at that time \$425. With this he started in life. As an example of patient, persistent frugality and thrift the foregoing is a particularly striking example.

At this time he had an uncle living in Malabar, N. Y., who was the principal of what was then known as Franklin academy. The boy wrote to him and was permitted to attend school there and do "chore" about the house for his board and sweep the schoolhouse and build the fire for tuition and books. He had never been outside of Rutland county, and thus, at seventeen years of age, alone and considerably frightened, he started for Malabar to continue his education.

Going Through College on \$425. There he fitted himself for matricu-

lation and entered Middlebury college in the fall of 1860. He then caught the patriotic fever of the day and served one year in the army, enlisting in August, 1862, and continuing in the service until July, 1863, when he returned to college and graduated in his old class of 1864. To accomplish this he worked at haying nearly every summer and taught school every winter, studying hard meanwhile to make up his arrears. With his original savings of \$425 he fitted himself for college and completed his course with excellent assistance from any one but his own willing hands and busy brain.

John A. Mead "cut it pretty fine," however, as at the time of his graduation he was so "hard up" that he was obliged to sell all his books, particularly the English books of the final year, that every graduate likes to keep, and so he graduated from Middlebury, square with the world financially, but nearly penniless.

Tries Unsuccessfully to Re-enlist.

Finding nothing to do at home, he then tried to enlist in the army again, going to Castleton, where it was reported two or three soldiers were required to complete their quota for that purpose. He found that the last man had just been enrolled and returned from Castleton in a gravel car, thoroughly discouraged. This was low tide in his fortunes, however, as he found a letter awaiting him from Champlain, N. Y., offering him a position as teacher in the high school for a term of four months. He started for Champlain that evening and finished the term teaching.

Immediately upon his return he began to study medicine with Professor Joseph Perkins of Castleton, paying most of his expenses by caring for the office and assisting the doctor or professor. Then he continued the study of medicine, attending the first course of lectures in the medical department of the University of Vermont.

Quarry Worker That He Might Be Doctor.

He continued with Dr. Perkins for nearly two years, when the pinch of poverty came again, and he gave up his studies and began working on a quarry at West Rutland, having a strong desire to graduate, if possible.

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THE MEAD BUILDING, RUTLAND.

ment of Columbia university, and graduated from this medical institution in the spring of 1868.

No Dress Suit to Graduate In.

He immediately received an appointment as house physician to the Kings County hospital, where he went the next morning after graduating. An incident in connection with this graduation is the fact that out of ninety-three students he was the only one who did not possess a dress suit, but was obliged to wear an old shabby black diagonal suit, and as far as his finances were concerned he had religiously saved just enough money to purchase a ticket to Vermont, his bewilderment on receiving the same night during the exercises a long official envelope containing his appointment as house physician at Kings County hospital was such that he is said to have struck a pin into his leg, fearing that he might be dreaming.

After being in the hospital about three months he was unexpectedly placed on a salary of \$800 a year, which was wealth untold to the young fellows of that day, who were accustomed to "walk the hospitals" for their board and washing.

Mead Learned to Say "No."

The importance of "unconsidered trifles" in relation to this appointment is well exemplified by